

Postoperative Care Instructions for Gastrotomy

Your pet has had a procedure with North Peninsula Veterinary Surgical Group called a gastrotomy. This abdominal surgery allows us to access the stomach for a variety of reasons, including the removal of foreign objects or to perform a biopsy. It is important to allow your pet time to heal, avoiding possible injury while they recover. Please keep this in mind and strictly follow the postoperative care instructions here.

What to Watch For

If you notice low appetite or vomiting, lethargy, black and tarry stool or increasing pain, please contact us immediately.

Activity

- Absolutely no running or jumping, unsupervised use of stairs, or playing roughly with any pets or children.
- All toileting and time outside must be done on-leash.
- Avoid access to slippery floors such as hardwood and stairs.
- Plan to restrict your pet's activity for the next 2 weeks. This includes very short walks on-leash three times a day for toileting purposes only.

Incision Site

- Monitor the surgical site daily for infection. This can present as swelling, redness, discharge or signs of sudden pain to the touch. Call us immediately if you notice any of these.
- Discourage scratching and licking at the incision. Call us if you're struggling to control this behavior.
- Keep the surgery site clean and dry. Do not apply any ointments or other treatments. No bathing or swimming for 14 days after the procedure.

Medications

- Make sure you have a plan to give all medications as directed, including reminders where necessary. Call us if you believe your pet may be having a poor reaction to any of their medications.
- If your pet experiences a loss of appetite, vomiting, diarrhea or dark and tarry stool, call us immediately.



Food & Water

- Your pet should have access to water at all times and can be fed their regular food.
- We may recommend a bland diet following surgery for a few days before returning to their normal food.

Recovery Trajectory

- You can generally expect your pet to have a slow but steady recovery. If you notice that your pet is lethargic, experiencing more pain or seems generally unwell, please call us immediately.
- If you notice low appetite or vomiting, lethargy, black and tarry stool or increasing pain, please contact us immediately. Note that bowel movements are often delayed 1-2 days following surgery.

Follow-up Appointment

- We will schedule a follow-up appointment to remove sutures and/or staples 10 to 12 days after the procedure.

We're here to help throughout your pet's recovery, please do not hesitate to call us with any questions or concerns.

